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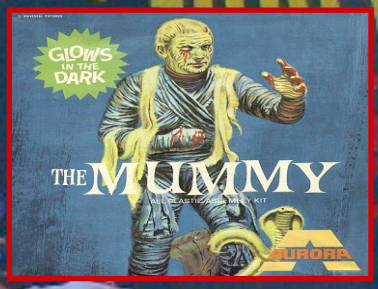
PSYCHO STYRENE

The Journal of SCI-FI, Fantasy, & Horror Modelling



Aurora Remembered

Martin Bower Talks Part 2

Iron Visions

How To Restore Old Model Kits

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Data Burst

By Geek Bot

First off I would like to correct a mistake last issue where I left the Author of the Padd article off his name is Keith Landry and he makes them to order you can contact him here

Ok with that done I would like to go off from specific model related topics here for a bit of a personal rant. The last few weeks I have been quiet on the forums and with the site due to the fact that In it's wisdom AOL Cut me off from the internet. Now Not to be funny here but why is it that these call centres today seem to thrive on putting you off from being able to speak to anybody that could help you do something to resolve the problem. To add insult to injury with this they are giving stupid dates to re-connect me and then won't respond to request for a call to explain the situation to me or to answer my letters do THEY really expect me to just go away?

I was wondering if anyone else has had a similar problem with other companies if you have drop me a line here at Readers Comments or here on the forum

Well that's my rave over for this issue we have some good articles in here this issue so enjoy the mag and we will be back to our regular transmission in 60 days☺

Front Cover By Charlie Norris & Darren Llewellyn
Rear Cover By Martin Bower

This Issue

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Techniques

AURORA'S GIGANTIC FRANKESTEIN Restoring Life to Some Classic Plastic

By

He's squat, funny looking and when he was introduced to a monster hungry public back in the mid 1960s, his four dollar and ninety-eight cent price tag was more than the average monster model fan's allowance. So, it comes a little surprise that when "Big Frankie" was first offered in stores, his sales were slow and he was never reissued. However, from that failure Aurora's Gigantic Frankenstein has become one of the most popular and sought after kits in the Aurora monster line. He also commands among the highest prices among collectors, especially for a mint in box example with its fantastic James Bama portrait of Glen Strange gracing the box top.

When Polar Lights began reissuing the old Aurora monsters, the popular cry among many model maniacs of the time was for the reissue of "Big Frankie". However, Polar Lights didn't see the profit in it and never brought this particular monster back to life. There was a vinyl version available for a short time in the late 1990s, but even that version has begun to command high collectors' prices. Among fans of monster models, hope never dies and Moebius Models (which has done an outstanding job of reissuing some of the more obscure old Aurora kits as well as a few new items) has announced a new release of the Gigantic Frankenstein in styrene and at a more buyer friendly price. Although it will not be priced anywhere near the original release price of $4.98, it will be far less than the thousands of dollars an original mint copy demands on the collector's market. There is joy among Big Frankie fans once more.

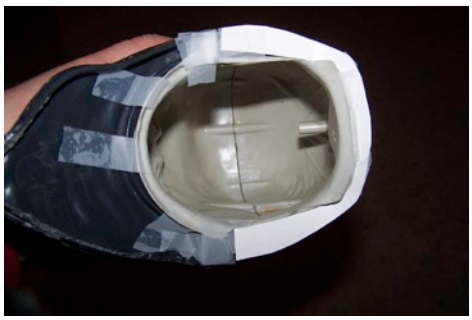
Way back when I was a young Monster Modeler, I never had the desire to buy and build a Gigantic Frankenstein, although now I wish I had bought several of them and stashed them away in a safe place for all these years. Nope, I liked my monsters to be more realistic, so I stuck with the original series of Aurora kits. Now that I'm older and wiser, I have often thought about building one of these big fellas, just for the experience of it. The opportunity came up when a friend of mine purchased a very nice example that was nearly complete and was practically unpainted. My friend wanted Big Frankie built, but didn't feel his modeling skills were up to the task of restoring this pretty pricy piece of plastic. Seizing the opportunity, I volunteered to perform the operation for my pal which would also allow me to fulfill my desire to build a Big Frankie without having to go the expense of actually buying one.

When he arrived at my house, Frankie was already mostly disassembled, so my work was already started for me. The only stipulation my friend gave me in the restoration and painting of this classic plastic was to match it to the photos of Big Frankie contained on the side panels of the box. Fortunately, he provided me with copies of those pictures to work from. The first thing I needed to do was disassemble the parts that needed work. The head, hands and shoes all showed gaps in their seams and I knew that I could get rid of most of those gaps by removing the forty year old plastic cement and doing a bit of sanding. I carefully used my hobby knife to work around the seams, separating the assembled

parts into their individual components. Once I had a pile of parts, I started my own Dr. Frankenstein like work and began breathing new life into this dormant plastic.

In order to get a better fit on many of these parts, it was necessary to remove not just the forty year old glue, but many of the locating pins as well. I used my motor tool, sandpaper and a lot of scraping to clean up the mating surfaces so they would fit together without gaps. When the parts had been sufficiently shaped for a good fit I broke out the Ambroid Pro Weld cement to put them all back together again. Ambroid actually melts the plastic, welding the two parts together at the seam, giving a very secure fit and eliminating much of the need for gap filling. However, because of the age of these parts, there was some warpage and some filling was necessary. I used both gap filling super glue and Squadron Green Putty to eliminate any showing seams. The super glue was used in the larger gaps and the Squadron Green was used for areas like the shoes and head. To reduce the need for sanding, I smoothed the Squadron Green with lacquer thinner which helped it blend in to the surface. The same thing can be accomplished with acetone, but care must be taken with both acetone and lacquer thinner because they both react with plastic and can cause it to melt if too much is used.

With parts reassembled, I did a test fitting to see how Big Frankie would look all together. My pal purchased this particular kit knowing it was not totally complete, he knew Frankie was missing a small triangular shirt piece that fit just below the button on his jacket, this was replaced by a resin casting. However, when I did my test fitting I found that there was another piece missing, it was the collar that fit around the back of Frankie's neck and was the attachment point for his chain. Searching on line and asking friends for photos of the missing part, I got a good idea of what it should look like and decided that it wouldn't be too hard to recreate it myself. After carefully tracing the contours of Frankie's neck and jacket, I was able to come up with the basic shape of the part. I transferred this horseshoe shape on to some card stock and cut it out, taping it in place at the back of Frankie's neck. I used Aves two part Apoxie Sculpt to build up the shape of the collar.



The tape that held the card stock form in place also acted as a barrier between the Aves and the plastic, preventing it from bonding so I would have a separate piece when I was done. While the Aves was still soft, I pressed the round attachment point of Frankie's chain into it so I'd have a preformed place to glue it later. My final replacement

part wasn't an exact duplicate of the original Aurora piece, but once it was painted and in place it made a perfect substitute.

As he was originally produced, Big Frankie would have been pretty easy to paint for a young modeler. He was molded in several colors, black for his shoes and jacket, dark blue-gray for the pants and shirt, gray for the rock, head and hands and a metallic copper for the chain and electrodes. The only real painting required would have been the head hands and hair and perhaps a few details here and there for the more ambitious modelers. Of course, I had bigger plans. When I received Frankie the only parts that had any paint on them were his head and one of his hands. The forty year old coating of flesh and black paints was removed by spraying the parts with Easy Off Oven Cleaner and leaving them sealed in a plastic bag overnight. The parts were scrubbed with an old toothbrush under running water and most of the old paint slid easily down the drain. After reassembling the parts into their bodily components, I planned my paint scheme.

Due to Frankie's large size I figured I'd do the majority of the base coats with spray cans and do the detailing with the airbrush and by hand. To match the box art photos as my friend requested, I used flat black for the torso and shoes, cobalt blue for the pants, dark gray for the shirt parts and a lovely sea foam green for Frankie's flesh areas. To add some wear and highlights to the black jacket, I airbrushed gray on the edges and other spots that might show some wear, like elbows. The pants were highlighted in the same way, but with a lighter blue. Flesh areas were where the most detailing took place. First I gave the face and hands a wash of dark green in artist's oil paint, to bring out the lines and shadows. Since oils take a notoriously long time to dry, I sped up the drying time by spraying on a light coat of Testors Dullcote. This was followed by a drybrushing of an acrylic craft paint from Delta called Cactus Green which was a pretty good match for the original Sea Foam base color. With the skin pretty much taken care of I turned my attention to Frankie's other details, his scars were carefully filled in with an Iron Oxide color so they were reddish, but not too red. The stitches were carefully painted in flat black. One interesting thing about Frankie's face is that instead of pupils in his eyes, he has holes. This may go back to his origins when he was planned to be a mechanical toy instead of a model. Some speculate that the plan was to put lights in his eyes where the pupils should be. What ever the reason, those holes made it kind of easy to get perfect pupils without any paint at all.

Once all the paints were dry, Frankie was assembled and readied for shipping back to his permanent home. I had a great time restoring this classic piece of modeling history and I'm very glad I was given this opportunity. However, I still don't have any real desire to actually own one of these monstrous creatures. I prefer my monsters a bit more scary, accurate and not so darn loveable.

Iron Man Helmet

By Travis Sallenbach

The kit I'll be talking about in this article is a replica of the 2008 Iron Man movie, made in fibreglass resin, 1:1 scale and includes two pieces. The sculpt itself is nothing shy of brilliant, very accurate to the source material, extremely symmetrical, super sharp detail, great flow and one of the nicest castings I've received. It's always a bit of a worry when ordering kits of this, or really any nature from someone you have never dealt with before, never quite sure what to expect but I was very happy to report the maker of this sculpt, Weaselflinger (weaselflinger@yahoo.com) takes the utmost of care when pulling a copy to make sure it's one he would appreciate getting himself, he puts in the work and it shows!

Being a raw kit, the trimming is all left to the builder, this can be a pretty lengthy process in cases, taking the flashing edge off of the piece, cutting out eyes and/or other holes, and getting it set for the sanding stage. In this case, it wasn't complicated at all and actually went fairly fast! The edge is anywhere from an inch to a quarter inch and made quick work of with a Dremel and cut off wheel.

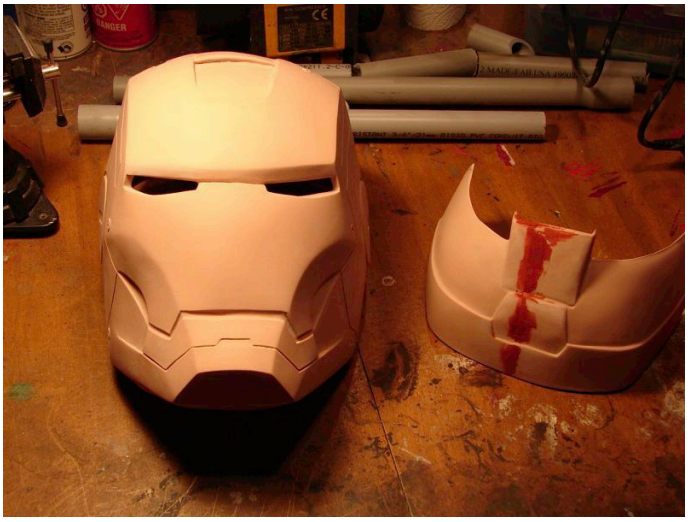
Fibreglass is fun isn't it? Nothing I've worked on makes near as much of a horrible mess and it puts a ton of that real fine dust in the air your lungs just love. I would very highly recommend safety glasses and a dust mask to help that. It will also irritate your hands, wearing gloves does cut down some dexterity, which is why I don't use them, but you do pay for that later.

Once the initial edge has been cut off my favourite tool is the Dremel again, this time with a sanding bit, going over all the edges again to get them 98% flush to where you want them. I say 98% because the last little bit you really want to do by hand to get the smoothest finish possible. Before you put the Dremel away, you will need to do the eyes and on a piece like this helmet, in such close quarters that can be tricky. They're to narrow to use that favourite sanding bit from the front and then to get them perfectly square is another issue. Unless, you go in from behind! Using that same sanding bit, go slowly inside the mask, grinding down the eyes from the back. They will be humped slightly from the resin setting and drooping just a tad. Watch carefully when you start to go through and thin down the area, let the natural edges appear and come out. Then just grind down enough so the negative space material falls out, go over the edges a little to crisp them up, checking from the front to see how you're doing. There you have it, perfect eyes every time, no worry, no fuss!

Before you start celebrating too much, it's time to test fit the pieces and see where you are. This is a crucial step in seeing how the finished helmet will come out and seeing where you need to go from here. I find it really helpful to mark with a pencil any problem areas and there will be some, where edges rub, or come into contact, these all need to be ground down for as flush a fit as possible. Checking each spot as you go helps too, it shows you other spots to address and sometimes fixes other spots you hadn't

got to yet. Go slow here and really take your time; this is one of the real important steps to get a really nice end piece. I go over this and over this until I'm completely happy, then I usually double check, to avoid going back in when it's painted to fix a little problem I'm sure I'm the only one that can see but still drives me insane.

Once you have the pieces fitting to your satisfaction it's time to go back over everything and sand the edges. I do a 3 tier method with 3 different papers. I start with 120 grit paper and finish the edges that 2% to flush them and smooth out what the Dremel leaves. I also do the inside of the eyes, to smooth that out and further sharpen those edges. Once I'm happy with that, I go to 280 grit, and just go over the edges again to further smooth them out, take out any sharp spots or rough spots. The third step actually comes a little later.



Now that the trimming is all done, it's time to fill/fix any little trouble spots, air bubbles, low spots, high spots, gouges, seam lines and pimples. Pimples are the little balls that form when the mould itself has an air bubble, usually occurring in small very tight places, like the heads of the screws. These are very easily taken care of in spots like that with a small drill bit. I generally go 2 sizes smaller then needed, and then just twist it by hand to clear out the pimple. On the surface, they just sand right down.

Gouges, air bubbles and low spots you have to fill, this is best accomplished by using filling putty, and Bondo had red spot filler that I always use for this kind of thing. It's cheap, easy to find, and super easy to work with! Just squeeze a little out onto a piece of throw away cardboard, and cut yourself a small trowel, also out of cardboard, flat single layer, not corrugated. Cut that about 3/4" or so wide, depending on what you need to fill. Smaller is much easier to work with then bigger though. Do a light skim coat of air bubbles, and anything deeper leave just a little thicker so you can sand it down.

Seam lines can be a real pain, usually you'll have high and low spots, and a ridge to deal with, the back plate of this kit had one of those, just indicative of the casting process. The first thing you need to do is take the Dremel with the sanding bit and take down the ridge and slightly level high spots, just a little, you don't want to thin the material down too much. Once you have that you go to the Bondo. The seam on this took a fair while to get smooth, you can see how it made the piece look almost like it had been cut in half and glued together off line. Looks a LOT worse then it really was. Lay the Bondo on slightly thick, to cover everything fully, don't be too picky, you'll be doing this several more times.

Once the Bondo is dry, roughly a half hour to an hour depending on how thick the patch is, you can sand. I use the 120 for thicker spots and the 280 for thinner, just going over by hand in one direction, then another, then in circles, to try to avoid pattern lines and keep the surface smooth. The best tool you have for judging smoothness is your hand, just feel over the spot, if you can feel where the patch was, you need more Bondo. I'll pretty much always go over patches twice or even three times, nothing worse then seeing dings and swirls in the finished paint.

For the seam, use the 120 and really go to town on it, sand it down almost all the way just leaving the Bondo mainly in the lowest spots. Dust the kit off thoroughly with a rag, or even vacuum it and then go over any spots that need a second coat of Bondo with a light skim. Do another fairly heavy coat on

the seam line and let that dry. I think you see the pattern here now, the goal is to have it as smooth as possible so you won't have to do as much Bondo work after t he primer. The back seam I built up and sanded down probably 7 or 8 times until it was smooth and the edges feathered enough you couldn't see anymore line.

This next step is to join the 2 pieces and the best method for that, magnets. I used 6 on this kit, 1 on each side and one at the back but it is up to you how many to use. Figure out the placement on the back piece first and use the magnet to mark out spots to cut out/grind down. You want the magnet to sit so it's flush with the edge, so it hits the magnet on the other piece fully. Use the Dremel to notch out spaces for the magnets, testing the fit as you go. Once you have the notch cut/grooved out to your satisfaction, put the back piece in place on the front and mark the fronts corresponding notches. When you have those cut out too, it's time to glue the magnets in. For things like this, I really like a 2 part compound, JB Weld is fantastic, but any 2 part epoxy works fine. Glue the back piece magnets in first and support them with a little masking tape. When you glue the front piece magnets, put the tape over them, then put the back piece on and adjust them as necessary for a perfectly flush fit. Take the back piece off again and let that set up for at least a day.

The next step is spraying it with a few light coats of primer. I like either Tremclad grey primer, or Krylon grey primer but really any flat finish paint will do. Flat black spray will work in a pinch. All you're doing is getting a fresh finish so you can see anymore areas that need attention and prepping for the final paint. I say a few light coats, because you want as full coverage as possible, with avoiding any runs or drips. So rather then one heavy coat, I do 3 light coats, leaving between half an hour to 2 hours in between. I then let that dry about a day before the next stage.

Once the kit is completely dry go over it with a fine tooth comb, searching out and trying to find where you had put Bondo, if you can see them, they need more, if you can feel them, they need more. So go over them again and repeat the same steps you did the first time until they are smooth as possible. Once that's done, and you're completely happy with the surface it's time for the third step with sand paper, wet sanding. I use 800 grit wet/dry paper, you have to watch you don't over sand, that's when you go through the primer coat, that's okay in small areas and this will happen but you want to limit that too. Use warm water and dip the paper in and also dip your hands in and wet down where you're going to sand. Then just go over the entire kit until it's smooth as glass. Your hands will tell you areas that need more and when they're good.

Congrats, you're ready for paint! This helmet has 3 colours to it, red gold and the black trim. It's always easiest to start with the most predominant colour first, so red. I do the inside of helmets just as personal preference but that's your call. Again, I prefer a few lighter coats, then a coat on the heavy side for maximum coverage and no runs, because those just suck, a lot. When both pieces are fully coated let them dry for a couple days, to really set up and cure well before you put tape on.

The gold is the next step, and one of the funniest! Use a thin masking tape; I like 1/4” wide blue painters tape. This lets you get a perfect edge, and the tape being so thin allows it to bend and curve FAR easier. Mask off as tight as you can to the edge with the blue tape, then go over it all with standard size masking tape. A good tip hear to prevent and paint peeling, take the tape and stick it to your shirt, or pant leg a couple times, this knocks the stick down just a tad. Once you have that tape line done, you need to mask off the rest of the helmet, you can use anything from printer paper, to actual masking paper, just tape it to the tape line and tuck the edges inside the helmet. Once it’s fully taped off, it’s time for gold! Again, a few coats building up, and one heavy coat at the end does the trick. Let that dry a couple hours, so it’s dry to the touch, then carefully take the tape off to let it finish curing. Peeling paint is a HUGE blow, and can really deflate you, I know, because it happened on this helmet, twice. Even with the best care, things do happen with these kits, it’s all part of the fun, yay. Depending on the peel there’s a few things you can do, if it’s small enough you can just paint over it and it usually does the trick, either respraying, or spraying some paint into a shallow container and then using a sponge to dab in the paint. If it is bigger, you’ll need to do some extra work. First thing is to let it dry and cure completely, at least a full day. Then with some 280 grit sand paper sand over the edges until they are as smooth as you can get. If need be, use a little Bondo over the spot to really get it smooth again. Then you have to remask and repaint. If you got away without any peeling great job!

The black lines are next, and take a bit of time to get right. The time involved is in the masking, I went over every line with the blue 1/4” tape to really make sure it was clean and crisp. Go slow, and careful, take a break if you need to, it is a lot. Once that’s all done use a black acrylic paint, the standard stuff in bottles is great. Then just take a fine brush and paint them in, going section by section, taking the tape off when you finish one section. You will have a little bit of slop on the edges, this is easily fixed by using a damp cloth and your finger, just go over the line and the paint comes right off, leaving a perfect line in it’s place! Again, go slow here and really take your time, the finishing work is what can make or break a piece.

When the black is done, you want to clear coat it. To ensure a smooth finish, add a nice high gloss shine to it, and give the paint a little protection. Automotive spray gloss is the best, and this you do want to do a fairly heavy coat on to make sure it’s all even and covers everything, just beware of the dreaded runs!

Once that’s all set up, a good day or so, it’s time for the lenses, and padding if you intend on wearing the piece. For the lenses, I wound up using an old pair of sunglasses I had that had a blue tint. You can use almost anything you want here, a motorcycle helmet visor is a popular option, just cut out pieces and glue them in. For the glue, I prefer hot glue on things like this, easy to use, you don’t have to get it right the first time, and you can always take them out if ever need be. I just put the lens in place, and gob the glue

in a couple spots and let that dry, really simple!

The padding, I also like hot glue, again easy to take out if need be, and you really don't need anything stronger. For the actual padding I like to use open cell foam, you can buy chunks at fabric stores, use seat cushion foam padding, or if you've ever had electronics shipped to you, you have some in boxes. The 2 important places to get with t he padding is the top of the head, so the helmet sits right on you, and the sides, to get a snug fit that won't wobble around. Cut pieces and test fit them, add more, or take away until you have a real nice fit, then just hot glue in place. Once that's done, so is the helmet, and you're ready to have some fun!

Interviews

Martin Bower – Modelling Legend Part 2

By Darren Llewellyn

All pictures are copyright Martin Bower

In this second part of our interview with Martin Bower we talk about some of the other projects that he has worked out in his career. And on his own answer to the SuperMarionation shows Starguard.

Which type of project do you prefer to work on?
I like projects that give me plenty of freedom to design my own hardware & I don't just mean spacecraft, I mean vehicles, space hardware, ALLSORTS! Indeed, it is weird that it could be said I started at the top, designing and building ships to my own design, yet in almost all the later years I have never had so much freedom!

Do you still get a buzz from the way fans react to your work when they see it?
Yes obviously it's nice when people say nice things about your work. However it saddens me when certain people (you know who you are!) start picking holes in the kit parts I used on say a "Space 1999" ship. They don't bother to find out that the entire model was designed & built in a couple of days, as was often the case with not only "Space 1999" but also Blake's 7 and Dr Who. These shows had almost no budget for models and only days to build everything in!

Of all the models that you have built and designed do you have a favourite?
That is THE TOUGHEST QUESTION: Can I have more than one? I loved the RAMCAT tracked vehicle I did for one of my videos, and as regards TV shows, probably "The Altares" from "Into Infinity"

I read on your website about the cancelled War of the worlds' photo novel, do you find it annoying when you have put so much work into those models only to find that nothing comes of it?
Yes. EXTREMELY, particularly as I had everything built and ready to go. I'd built sets of Weybridge all smashed up like it is in the book, & built 3 models, 2 of which were fully movable. The largest model is in the "Science Fiction Museum in Seattle". The smallest was destroyed during filming and the 2ft model was done up and given to a friend who craved it, only to sell it on e-bay 2 months ago! (Yes, you see I DO know it was sold!)

Were you a fan of HG Wells?
Very much so, And not just his SF books. But seeing Ray Harryhausen's "First Men in The Moon" was a turning point for me. I couldn't believe it when my mum took me to see this film about Victorian spaceships but she knew what I liked and I LOVED Cavor's Sphere. I am also privileged to have known Ray Harryhausen since I built him a replica of the Sphere way back in 1986. (The original was stolen)

I've known him ever since and what a lovely guy he is!

Your own project "Starguard", seems like such a good concept for a show, why do you think that it never got made into a show?
I could speculate for hours. Indeed I HAVE speculated for hours. But there are certain people out there who will stop at nothing to make sure you don't get something made. I also think it's fair to say I've met more than my fair share! I've had "solemn promises" from backers, only to have them pull out suddenly for reasons I couldn't understand, or get to the bottom of but I think if I was asked to name one thing I'd say it was perceived as too expensive.

What would you say were your greatest influences in the creation of Starguard?
I wanted an up-to-date "Thunderbirds" type show, but I'd seen "Team America"
And I thought that, with a bit of work, those kinds of puppets could work well in "STARGUARD". The puppets needed some work but they got a lot more expression into them than the fibreglass Thunderbird puppets. I really thought they were good.

You created a lot of models and characters for that project; did you have a particular favourite?
Again that is so difficult: The main base in the film set in the Arctic looked great when it smashed up through the ice. Also craft like the Manta Submarine was a design I really liked.

When you are designing characters do you have someone in mind who you would like to play them and does that ever influence the look of them?
Yes I do, it was originally going to be puppets and I REALLY still would rather do it with puppets but they are so very costly and limiting in what they can do. I had a slightly enigmatic professor in it that I wanted the actor Patrick Malahide to play but there's no reason why he could not have a puppet character like him!

With such puppet films as Team America and Agent Crush being done lately do you think there might be a place for a version of Starguard in today's market?
Yes, absolutely. That's how I planned "Starguard". Indeed, a guy I know who did puppets for "Agent Crush" is Phil Eason, the guy I wanted to do my puppets. I did a couple of models for Agent Crush! That's really weird! I was sworn to secrecy over it but since you've mentioned it.

With all of the models that you have made have you ever considered putting on an exhibition of your work?
I've had 5 major Exhibitions spread over the past 10 years or so. I had one at the Warrington Museum & Art Gallery that bought in over 10,000 people!

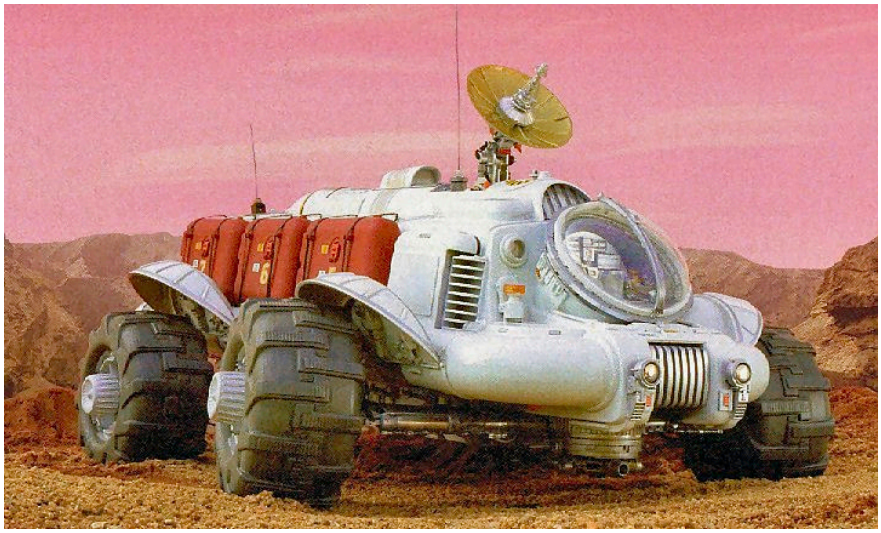
Another at the DLI (Durham light Infantry) Museum in Durham that bought in just over 9,000 people. Another at the "Museum of Science & industry" which I think is still ongoing. I had an exhibition recently in an art gallery in Poole in Dorset which raised £7,000 in 6 weeks. The biggest exhibit by far was the Sunderland Art Gallery Exhibit in 1994 which drew in their greatest number visitors at 18,600!

Over the years you have done a lot of articles for books and magazines as of your work most notably for Sci-Fi & Fantasy modeller, as well as some tutorial videos, do you get as much satisfaction out of these as you do from making models?
No, not really. I was doing those off my own bat. I didn't get paid and indeed quite a few people pointed out I was giving too much away! I sold just on 400 of each of the model making technique videos but the videos were pirated both in the USA & Australia which I was sad to hear about

You wrote quite a few articles as well as the videos for that publication, how did you become involved with them?
The videos weren't anything to do with the magazine, although some were sold through it but after 15 issues the editor decided he didn't want to use me any more and suddenly I heard nothing more from him.

I read the other week that you were planning to put together an archive type book of the work you have done over your career, when are we likely to see a tome like this to buy?
I don't know! But it is definitely a goer. But it's in its early stages at present and I don't know how long these things take.

Have you ever considered doing a kind of How to book, giving modellers some hints and tips on building Sci-Fi and fantasy stuff?
That's EXACTLY what the magazine is about, as opposed to the book. It's a magazine showing in depth how well-known models were made.



That would be the new magazine, Martin Bower's Modelling World, how did that come about?
I had some fans that approached me and asked if I would do this magazine so I said yes.

Are you going to be writing the articles for this magazine?
At this time I'm not sure.

Will we see any new creations from you in these magazines or will it be choc full of classic models from your illustrious career?
I think it's most likely it will be as you've described it above. It seems people want to know how it was all done! Anyway I'm pleased to be given the chance to put the record straight. There are a lot of misconceptions out there about how I built and what I used, for the "Space 1999" models!

I'm sure that all of the Sci-Fi fans out there will be drooling at the prospect of seeing your work in print.
I hope so. I certainly have an amazing amount more material than I realised I'd done!

Are there any tips that you could give the readers for modelling?
Yes -read the magazine!

Finally, is there any show that you would have liked or like to work on?
I would have liked to work on "Thunderbirds", although in a way I did get that chance when I did all those models & photos for the 1991-93 comics, Poster Magazines & DVD covers.

Thank you for spending the time with us to do this interview and we wish you all the best on your magazine and book.

You can check out more of Martin Bowers Models on his website martinbowersmodelworld.com

Filmography

Space 1999
Into Infinity AKA "The Day After Tomorrow"
Terrahawks (I ONLY DID THE PRE-PRODUCTION MODELS)
Blake's 7
Captain Zep: Space detective
The Tripods
ET Please Phone Home!
Blake's 7
Doctor Who (spread over 3 different doctors)
Outland
Flash Gordon
Alien
The Medusa Touch
Star Cruiser
Lisztomania
Stainless Steel & the Star Spies
Horizon
ET Please Phone Home
The Great Palace of Westminster
Robbie the Reindeer (AKA "Close Encounters of the HERD kind")
Frankenstein Vs The creature from Blood Cove. (YES! Seriously that really

was the title!)

TV Commercials featuring my models

MALIBU Drinks
COCA COLA Drinks
Jif Dessert Toppings
Shredded Wheat (breakfast Cereal)
FORD cars

I don't know if this counts, but I have also worked on comics like "2000 AD"
& "STARLORD" (producing photo covers for 15 issues)

most recently and prominently the recreation of the models, props & sets for ALL the
Thunderbirds, Stingray & Captain Scarlet comics, Poster Magazines, Annuals &
DVD covers. Producing over 100 SFX scenes for these over a 3 year period.

I also built 6 models & miniature sets for "The ILLUSTRATED Hitchhikers Guide
to the Galaxy"

models & photographic set-ups for the following productions:-
"Dan Dare" (3 different versions!)
"War of the Worlds" (Photo Novel)
The Definitive UFO casebook
Phenomenon
"Stainless Steel & the Star Spies" was a one off pilot that came as a
spin-off from the "For Mash Get Smash" Aliens! Remember them?
"Connections"
I was also heavily involved with a film project with artist Roger Dean
called "Gnosis" building
this huge Space Station type thing with domed green houses on it a bit like
the film "Silent Running"
I also built 3 1/4 scale futuristic cars for him
in the 1980's which are still at Beaulieu today in their "Wheels"
Exhibition. They were huge great tings!

Dutch Lives - Brian takes a look at a resin kit from predator

Titan Find - an Interview with a garage company That makes Blakes seven models

DIY Decals - How to design create and make deacals.

Sith Beware - A what if reworking of the mkII Jedi Starfighter

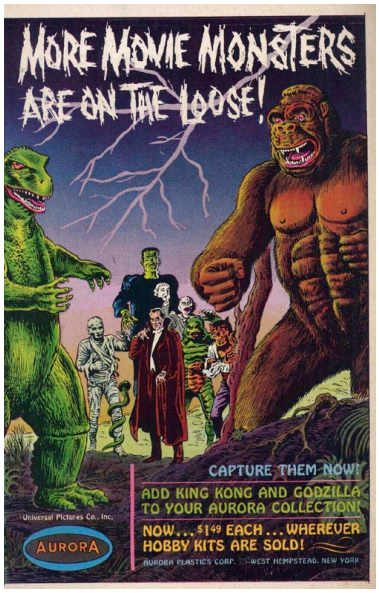
Robbie The Robot - a Nice conversion By Charlie Norris

Reviews

AURORA – The Men That Made A Monster

By Mike Rutherford

The year was 1971 and most of the adults were in shock over Archie Bunker and that new hit TV series, All in the Family. Many of the children of 1971 were still fascinated by the Monsters that haunted their older sibling's nightmares during the 1960's Monster Craze. I was only turning four years old that year and although I knew the names of Dracula and Frankenstein, my biggest concerns were H.R. Pufnstuf and The Banana Splits Show. There was a seventeen year age difference between my Father and his youngest Brother, Jonathan. Jonathan was only six years older than I and although he was my Uncle it was more of a Wally and Beaver, brother type relationship that we shared. Jonathan would be turning ten this year and he was introducing me to all sorts of cool things such as Monsters, Dinosaurs and even Count Chocula cereal.


MORE MOVIE MONSTERS ARE ON THE LOOSE!
CAPTURE THEM NOW!
ADD KING KONG AND GODZILLA TO YOUR AURORA COLLECTION!
NOW...$1.49 EACH...WHEREVER HOBBY KITS ARE SOLD!
AURORA PLASTICS CORP. WEST HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK
Universal Pictures Co., Inc.
AURORA

I would often spend weekends at my Grandparent's home where Jonathan and I would play but it was this one particular weekend that stands out for me. It was the weekend where Jonathan asked me if I wanted to see something scary and although hesitant, I said yes. He warned me that I couldn't cry because if I did so, he would surly have had to deal with the wrath of Grandma for frightening me. I agreed not to cry and we went into the walk-in closet where he showed me this white Frankenstein figure that didn't really look all that scary to me. He then turned off the light and this Frankenstein figure had turned greenish in colour and was glowing in the dark. The world around me was pitch black except for this Frankenstein figure. Yes, I was now scared and I decided that we should now leave the closet. As it turned out, this Frankenstein figure was a plastic snap together model kit from a series known as the Monster Scenes. My Uncle also had a female figure from this series that was known by the name of, The Victim. As long as the lights stayed on, I really enjoyed playing with these figures. Although they were actually Model kits in the sense that they needed to be assembled and painted, they were also designed to be played with like an Action Figure. We used to take an old bird cage and make believe that Frankenstein would lock the Victim up in this cage. Being only four, I had no idea what to call this new form of play so I just started to call it the "Monster and Girl" game. The Monster Scenes was a line that was developed by a plastic model kit company known as Aurora. Because of my age, I was only able to see the tail end of Aurora that basically started around the time of the Monster Scenes. As it turned out, Archie Bunker wasn't the only one who had adults' heads turning. Concerned Moms and religious activists were also focusing their attentions towards Aurora and the Monster Scenes line. I wasn't able to yet read as I hadn't even started kindergarten but the Monster Scenes boxes had a splash on them that read, "Rated X for Excitement". This along with the fact that this series also included torture devices such as a hanging cage that children were placing the extra large breasted women of the series in was enough to make certain parties complain.

By this time, the Aurora Company had been sold to Nabisco, the folks that brought us all of those unhealthy cookies for so many years. Well, Nabisco wasn't interested in having complaints of such violent and sexual nature associated with their company and they basically pulled the Monster Scenes line from store shelves throughout the United States. This was not the last of the Aurora Monsters, not for me. The

Aurora Company was still producing other Glow in the Dark Monster Model kits and although I didn't know the history of these kits (at the time) they were re-releases of Monster Model kits that were originally produced in a less innocent time, during the 1960's. I won't get into the entire history of how the Aurora Company was founded because that story has been retold numerous times in different magazine articles and books, but I will touch on how the Monster Model kits were first brought to life. In 1960, Aurora was still owned by the original owners, Shikes, Cuomo and Giammarino but it was the Advertising man known as, Bill Silverstein who was actually responsible for this success. Legend tells that Silverstein was walking down the street as he passed by a movie theatre. It seems as if there were a line of children waiting to get in to see the double feature of the day, Dracula and Frankenstein both from Universal Pictures and both made in the 1930's. Remembering how much he enjoyed these Monster movies as a child and seeing how these movies still held up with the current children of the day, he decided that the Monsters might make interesting subjects for model kits. It is said that Silverstein immediately went to Aurora's art department to make up a dummy box for a Frankenstein model however; no one else involved in the Aurora Company believed that a model kit of the Frankenstein monster would sell. Thankfully, Silverstein never gave up on this idea and after many weeks he told the Aurora heads that if they didn't give the Frankenstein idea a chance, he would resign and form his own company to produce these kits. Aurora reluctantly agreed and Silverstein went to Universal to get the rights to produce models of Frankenstein and many of the other Universal Monsters.

GHOSTLY GLOW-POWER STRIKES
THE MONSTERS ARE BACK. AND THEY GLOW IN THE DARK
WHAT'S NEW SOME GRUESOME?
BRING A FIEND HOME FOR DINNER!
PLAY IT COOL... GHOUL!
WHEN YOU GOTTA GLOW... YOU GOTTA GLOW!
WAIT UNTIL DARK
GET THEM BEFORE THEY GET YOU!
Aurora has put new life in the Movie Monsters. Wait'll you see what hap
when the lights go out! $1.50 each, wherever hobby kits are sold.
FRANKENSTEIN THE WOLF MAN PHANTOM OF THE OPERA THE MUM
DRACULA THE FORGOTTEN PRISONER OF CASTLEMARE
©1969 AURORA PLASTICS CORP., WEST HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK
The World's Largest Manufacturer of Hobby Products
AURORA

Frankenstein - 1961,
Dracula,
The Wolfman - 1962,
The Mummy,
The Creature,
The Phantom of the Opera - 1963,
The Hunchback,
King Kong,
Godzilla,
Dr Jekyll as Mr Hyde - 1964,
The Bride of Frankenstein,
The Witch,
The Forgotten Prisoner - 1965.

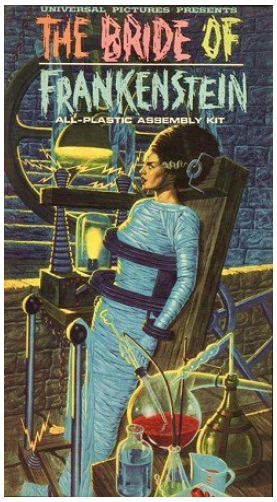
For some, the box art for these kits were even more exciting than the models themselves. The original art was painted by James Bama and

this art was absolutely gorgeous. The one thing that I have learned is that The Aurora Monsters will NEVER die. After their original releases, six of these kits were all re-released in 1969 with slightly new box art and a new title, Frightening Lightening because parts of the models (such as the

heads and hands) were now made in Glow in the Dark Plastic. All of these models (except the Bride

of Frankenstein) were released again in a run that lasted from 1969 to 1975 that also provided glow in the dark pieces. These were the ones that Jonathan and I built. Aurora had taken many of the original James Bama paintings and had them painted over in brighter colours that also showed the new glow in the dark features for this box art. The boxes were now square rather than the original rectangular long boxes.

The new Wolfman box was totally different from the original release due to complaints from angry parents and children alike who claimed that the original box was misleading because the actual model didn't resemble the box art. The Bride



of Frankenstein and the Witch were originally released in hope of getting girls interested in building models. As it turned out, little girls had better things to do than to build Monster models so when the mould for the Bride of Frankenstein was damaged, it was decided that Aurora wouldn't spend the money to repair the mould as The Bride was considered a poor seller. The Forgotten Prisoner is NOT a Movie Monster but to Aurora fans around the world, he is an Aurora Monster. The Prisoner was a creation between Aurora and Famous Monsters of Film land Magazine. Basically, he was a Skeleton that was chained up to a wall in Castel Mare. Famous Monsters Magazine then held a contest where kids were allowed to create their own origin for this character. This was during a time when kids were encouraged to use their imaginations rather than sit with video games all day long.

Here we are in 2008. The original Aurora Frankenstein model was released over forty seven years ago and YET they still have a strong following. In the late 1990's a company called Polar Lights re-released eleven of the original thirteen Aurora Monsters. Garage kit companies have recast these kits in resin long before Polar Lights. There are new companies like Monarch Models that are creating new model kits featuring new characters like Nosferatu and the Ghost of Castel Mare but with the old Aurora styled box art and they look as if they could have been a part of the original series. A company out of California known as, Monsters in Motion has created resin model kits based of the original James Bama paintings that were used on the original Aurora Monsters Box Art. Original Monster model builders of the 1960's and 1970's have children and even

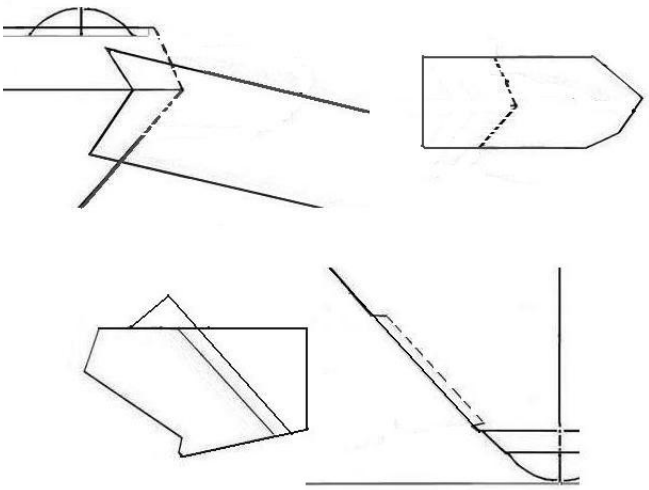
grandchildren that are being introduced to the Monsters of Aurora and have taken to building Monsters. The Monster Scenes line that was thought to be so disturbing in the 1970's has been available in resin for many years and is even going to be re-released again in plastic at some point this year. Like many great Monster Model builders before him, My Uncle Jonathan passed away in 2006 and time marches on for the rest of us but as I said, the Aurora Monsters will NEVER die

ScratchBuild

Endeavor Part 4

By John Michals

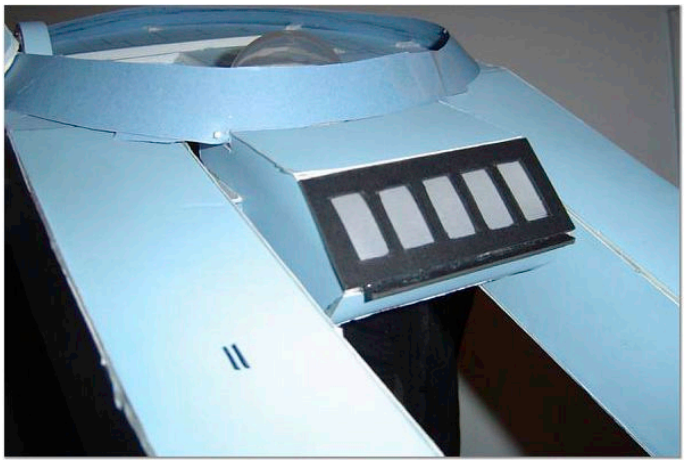
At this stage we have just about completed the engines and the main hull. We're nearly finished. Only the bridge and aft hatch need to be constructed and then attached, along with the engines, to the main hull. Using the method for constructing the engines take the blueprint and cut out the side walls of the bridge. Extend the parts of the walls that mate with the hull a little longer so you have extra material to work with when we attach it, (Fig. 1).



Do the same for the aft hatch. Once the sides have been cut, you will need to determine the width of the bridge and the aft hatch. The bridge is more difficult as it shares the same forward area the engines do. The blueprints I have drawn up are not set in stone. They serve as a guide. The artist introduced variations in his design over time so you can follow the blues strictly if you like but there is room for you to customize a bit.

Take the pieces and lay them out with the blues and determine how much spacing you want between them. Mark off where the bridge and the engines will go. Measure with a flexible tape measure or with a compass or protractor to make sure spacing is even. Also of note is that the number of windows on the bridge module is not necessarily fixed. In some issues of the comic book I have counted as few as 5 windows. In other instances I have counted as many as seven. Many times it varies form 5 to 6 windows. Keep this in mind when deciding the width of the bridge, (Fig02).

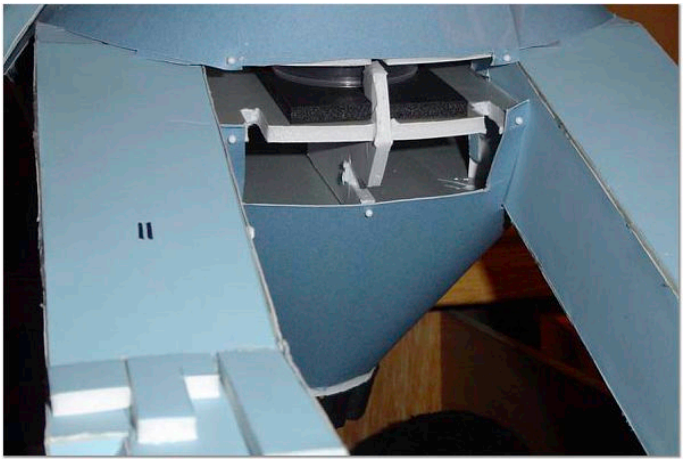
I decided not to use black foam board for the row of windows but black illustration board instead, (Fig03).You could still use foam if you prefer as it's easier to cut. My concern was since you will see into the bridge area you can see the thickness of the material making up the row of windows and the thicker foam board would look out-of-scale. Unless you want to detail the bridge you could take some tracing paper or vellum paper and cut a rectangular piece to glue to the inside so no one can see the inner structure, (Fig02B). In the comic book these windows have varied in colour from violet to yellow to red. There is no correct colour so if you prefer you could glue a piece of colour paper to the inside of the windows. You could also use colour transparent or translucent cellophane. What colour you choose depends on the colour of the outside hull that you constructed the ship out of. I have made a few versions and so far I have used white and sky blue foam board, (the



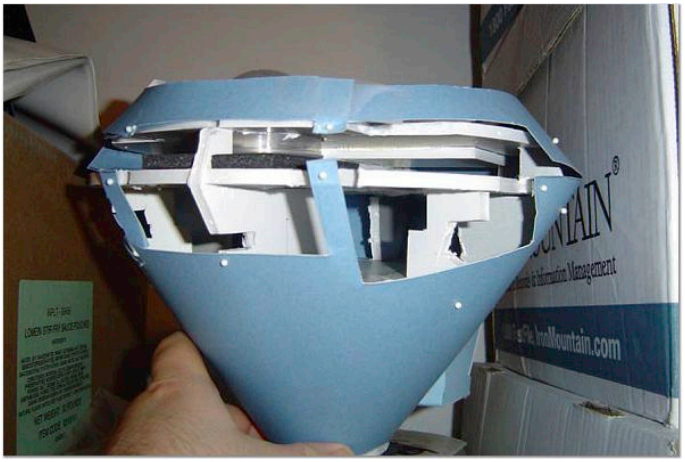
sky blue making the ship seem very comic-book coloured). There is also a dark grey on the market you could use, which I feel is too dark, and there is an excellent silver colour which I have yet to try.

Using the method for skinning the main hull, wrap the top ring with foam-board. Once you have done this mate up the bridge and engines. These pieces are particularly difficult as they intersect where the hull changes its angle. The way I have often attached these pieces was to cut a notch into the extensions of the pieces, (Fig02A), I was attaching and fit them to the supporting disk inside, (Fig04).

Then cut out enough space in the top ring and lower

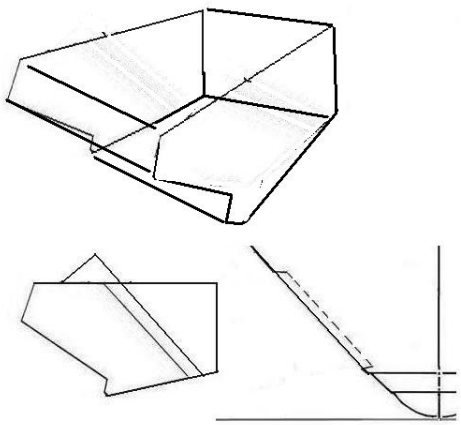


hull for them to insert into place. When cutting the larger hull be sure and start with a small hole. Keep test fitting the bridge and pylons until you have cut away enough of the foam, (Fig05). Go slowly and



carefully otherwise you might cut away too much and will have to patch up the hull. You want a clean cut edge and a snug fit for these pieces.

The aft hatch will attach in a similar fashion. Trim away the excess as you test-fit it. Again, start with a small hole and keep test fitting the rear hatch cover until you have cut away enough of the foam hull for a good fit. What is somewhat unusual about this rear hatch cover is that it does stick out on the sides in this configuration, (Fig06). This is not aerodynamic, but then neither is the whole ship! So if it looks funny or you think you have done something wrong rest assured you have not. If you are not comfortable with the look of this piece you can cut an alternate version which is more flush with the hull. Just don't extend it's width as a rectangle but as a trapezoid, with the length of the trapezoid facing



outwards to the rear, (Flush. jpg). Once you have the ship done you can detail it. However I won't go into detailing here. There are so many variations that it's best to consult the comic book and see what features pop up often enough that they should be included in a model. Also look over my galleries for more references. See the links below:

The Small Blue Model:
http://share.shutterfly.com/action/welcome?sid=8AaMmLdw3bN3sQ&emid=sharview&linkid=link5
The larger model for action figures, alternate white model and concepts for the interior:
http://pictures.aol.com/galleries/johnmiic/

Techniques

Snapping Plastic Part 2

By Roberto Williams

PLACE / POSE YOUR FIGURE:

Many people photographing their action figures don't give this nearly enough consideration. A decent placement / posing of your figure can emphasize its strengths and beauty and downplay its weaknesses. Even a mediocre miniature can be made to look like a million bucks when it is properly posed / placed prior to photography. Likewise, the finest crafted miniature in the world can be made to look awful with poor posing / placement before photography. If you are photographing an action figure, take the time to really consider the character that you are photographing.

How would he/she stand if he/she were being photographed in real life?
Would he look directly into the camera?
Does she look best on her left or on her right side?
Should this character hold their blaster, lightsaber, sword, shield, Bat-a-rang, rope (or whatever accessory) or would that actually distract from the visual strength of the figure?

These are all critical questions. Even the posing / placement of garments on your model are critical. If there is fabric don't let the fabric just hang limp or "poofy" on your character. Take the time to nip and tuck and gently fold the fabric with your fingers until it hangs on your figure in a pleasing way, don't be afraid to press it down with your fingers, molding the fabric over the contours of your figure's body. Eventually, the cloth will take the shape of an actual worn garment, and not look like a piece of stiff cheese hanging without character or style.

FRAMING:

So now, you know that you should be working in Macro photography to properly photograph your miniatures. Well, don't be afraid to get close your subject should adequately fill the frame of your finished photograph so that the viewer can properly appreciate it. I can't tell you how many photos I've seen of some beautiful miniatures where the subject took up maybe a corner of the frame

FOCUS:

Take the time to carefully focus your shot prior to photographing that miniature Camaro Model car you built The number one problem afflicting photos of miniatures is bad focus When shooting in Macro mode, you will need to hold that camera perfectly still because if you move in or out just a fraction of an inch during exposure, the focus will be thrown off Make sure that you are properly braced during photography to minimize your movements or, if you had too many cups of coffee this morning and can't quite keep it steady then use a tripod and a cable release to take your pics.

BACKGROUNDS:

Generally I find that it's best to keep my backgrounds plain and neutral. I make it a point to never photograph my models / miniatures on a shelf full of other items, or standing on a work bench full of distracting junk, these other items in the background of your photo will only make things look cluttered and will take the focus away from your main subject, which should be your awesome miniature one of the things that I like to do is pose my Models on a pale tabletop in front of a black background. By playing with the lighting on the backdrop, you can create many nice shades of grey that will make a particular character stand out remember the brightness value for this background should be different for each character I would not photograph a Darth Vader action figure against a black background, likewise it probably would not be wise

to photograph a Space Ghost action figure against a solid white background with the depth of field being as shallow as it is during macro photography, you may actually want to take advantage of this in regards to backgrounds ensure that they are far enough away from your main subject and it will become a blurry non-descript field in the finished photo this blurred background helps to make a sharply model leap out at the viewer

LIGHTING:

Virtually all of the photographic principles outlined above are meaningless if they are not applied hand in hand with light (natural light and artificial studio lighting) most novice miniature photographers use whatever light is available to them to photograph their subjects, when their photos come back from the lab they are usually horrified at the tint that can range from yellow/orange to green or blue that dominates the shot of course, they have no idea what they did wrong. The bright white uniform of their beautiful Star Wars Stormtrooper has photographed as orange how frustrating there is a very specific reason for this one.

An extremely important aspect of photographic lighting that you should all be aware of during color photography is something called the color temperature of light this is defined as the relative, apparent colour of a given source of light when viewed by a particular photographic device, I hear you all saying Huh, let me try to explain, lighting sources come in virtually every color of the visible-light spectrum, and each of them are seen a certain way by the camera/film stock that you are using. Understanding this will help you to make better creative decisions when lighting your models and miniatures for photography. The colour temperature of light is measured on the Kelvin scale that classifies the colour of bluest light on the high end of the scale to the reddest light on the lower end of the scale.

The human eye can compensate with any light source that it looks at and identifies it as white. We'll just deal with certain basic types of common light that most people take photographs with: Starting at the very top of the Kelvin scale, we have the bluest-white light source known to man daylight sun at high noon, this light source is rated at 5600° K, as we move a little lower on that light color temperature scale, we encounter the blue light of a camera's electronic flash rated at around 5500° K lower still will find a blue tungsten photography bulb at 4800° K right down to a greenish light rated at about 4000°K finally we get the household incandesant light bulb whose color temperature is a reddish 2800°K. to your naked eye, most of them look white but to photography / digital image equipment they

don't, for that reason, they have taken steps to ensure that the photographer can make any light source that he is working with appear as pure white in his photographs provided he is using the correct film in his camera, or has performed a White Balance on his digital camera.

Once you have determined which light source you will be using to take your pictures, you will need to purchase the correct corresponding film type if you want that light source to photograph as white. So if you are taking photos outdoors in the daylight, you will need to purchase film that is rated for the high color temperature of daylight. This film can be used indoors too but only if you're main light source is the sun coming in brightly through a window, or if you are using electronic flash ,which has a color temperature very similar to daylight, if you use that same film with a light source that it is not rated for, then your pictures will develop an overall colored cast.

For example: Daylight film used with tungsten Photo Bulbs or incandescent lighting will produce yellowish or reddish pictures. Why? Because daylight film is rated for a light source that is much bluer and it therefore "sees" your incandescent light for the reddish source that it is. The opposite also holds true. If you use a Tungsten-rated film stock (Type-A film or Type-B film) outdoors in the daylight, your pictures will develop a bluish cast on them. Why? This film stock only sees a warmer, reddish light as White and it therefore sees the Daylight sun as the blue light source that it actually is. In the digital electronic world, there are no film stock to contend with. However, the issue of Color Temperature of light is still very real. For this reason, it is important to do a proper White Balance of your camera prior to the start of your photography. This ensures that your main light source will be seen as white in your photos. Ensuring that you main light source is seen as white by your media is important because it is only white light that will represent the colors of your miniature subject accurately. Once you understand all these principles intimately, you'll be amazed at how your miniature photography will explode in its creativity.

You'll even be able to start using colour temperatures of light to create some interesting effects in your photos. For example imagine a really gorgeous Batman action figure photographed in a really nice night-time scene. You might use a correctly coordinated main light to illuminate the figure frontally in the correct color temperature. But you might also want to use a decidedly bluer light source (relative to your film stock or digital camera white balance setting) positioned behind Batman as a "rim right" to make him "pop" from the night sky black background. The final photo would be an incredibly dramatic night

time shot of The Batman (correctly colored), but with a blue edge light, highlighting his shape and contour against the night. Wicked! Ooooh... I get chills just thinking' about it! Sophisticated lighting techniques are often a matter of experimentation... especially with toys, models, and miniatures. Those techniques are generally based off a standard studio "3 point" lighting set-up that ensures really beautiful

portraiture:

1) One light is used on your background angled at a 45 degree angle. If the background is particularly large, then two lights might be used on either side to light it evenly.
On some set ups, you may opt to have no light at all on your background so that it reads as "inky" pure black. That leaves one light source available to use elsewhere on your subject for special effect. Don't forget to position your main subject as far away as possible from your background so that the lighting upon one does not affect the other.

2) A second light is positioned off to one side, or above, angled from behind your subject, directing light to its rear. When your subject is viewed from the front, this is the light that will give the outer contour of your figure its definition and separate it from the background. This is known as your backlight or "rim".

3) A third light will be positioned in front of your subject (off to one side). Preferably, you'll want to avoid having this main light positioned too frontally upon your subject. That would be overly harsh, flat, and detrimental to the details of your beautiful Action Figure. Some people may be tempted to use electronic flash to photograph their customs. I do not recommend this. First of all, the light given off will be too frontal, resulting in a "flat" and "boring" look. Secondly, since you will be working in Macro mode, the harsh light will be too close to your miniature subject, washing it out in the final photo.
Do yourself a favor: Don't photograph your beautiful miniatures with a mere desk lamp or a silly little flashlight. Do the right thing. Run to your local photography store and pick up some 250-watt photo bulbs and some appropriate film stock (if that's the type of camera you have). Get yourself 4 or 5 cheap clamp, socket and 12 inch reflector sets. Avoid plastic sockets, because they are dangerous to use with the very hot photo bulbs.
Now you're ready to light and shoot!

Okay my friends, with the information outlined in

this article, you are now armed with the knowledge you need to get out there and start taking pictures of those awesome toys, models and miniatures! Get to it and remember to practice, experiment and most importantly, to have fun!

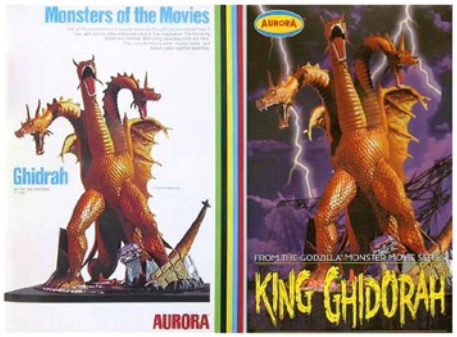
Reviews

King Ghidora

By Joachim Ertl

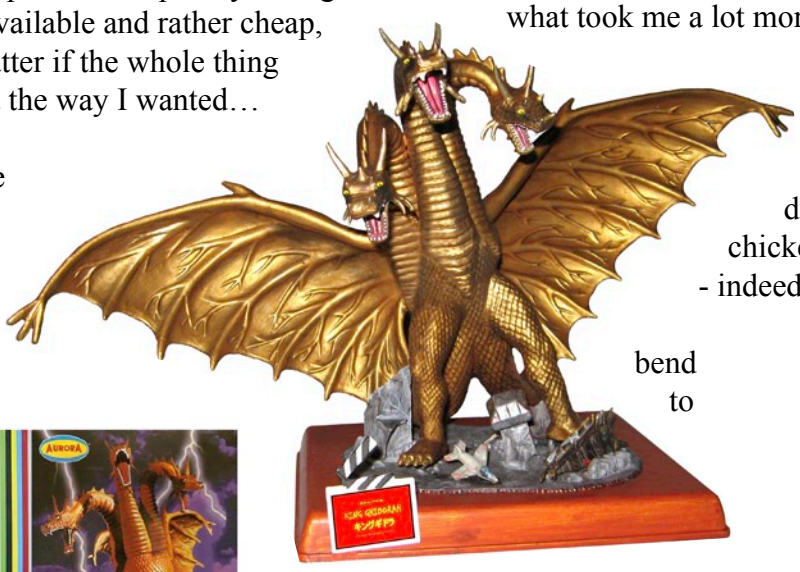
Well, here is my second build up since over 30 years. I choose it to practice because the model seemed to be easy – what proved completely wrong – and is widely available and rather cheap, so it wouldn't matter if the whole thing wouldn't turn out the way I wanted…

In the first picture you can see the original ad from the 70's for the model called just Ghidrah. I haven't seen an original model or box so far at all. Next to it is the box from my model, a remake from 2000 by Playing Mantis using the Aurora logo.



The second pic shows the parts and the third one the model just "snapped" together as suggested by the original instruction sheet: What a load of rubbish!

Until I started my third kit (Sleepy Hollow by Polar Lights) I thought this must have been the worst molded model in modeling history ever. Nothing fits, not even if brute force is applied. So there was a lot of fitting, and seem-filling and sanding involved what took me a lot more time than painting the baby.

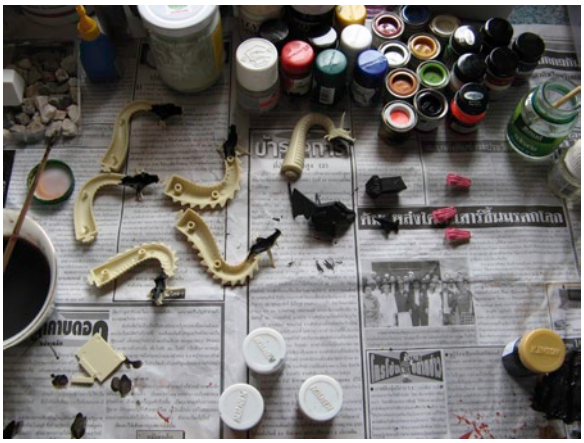


Once it was snapped together I thought it did look like a slaughtered chicken on the hook with its - indeed beautifully sculpted wings - bend to the back.

Whilst thinking about how to solve this problem – if at all and not just dumping it right into the dustbin under my desk – I decided to start with the base to do something productive. I remembered the article about the PL Phantom of the Opera in this mag and how marvelous the organ had been turned from dull plain plastic into some nice wood. So I did try that: I washed it a million times with gold again and again brushing into the same direction, drying whilst doing so, giving the plain plastic some wood-like structure. After that I did exactly the same with Liquitex Burnt Sienna and then again with Burnt Umber. It does look like genuine teak by now.

For the base was fun and proved – at least in my

view - to be beautiful, I decided to give it a go:



Heads were painted black form inside and had been washed red later. Lower Jaws had to be painted as seen in the picture. Whilst this stuff was drying, I turned back to the base, coating it grey (same here: none of the buildings, bits and pieces would fit in any way at all…), washed it several times in some dirty brownish dark grey and than in light grey. All the remaining work was done by dry-brushing.

The aircraft was thick coated in white and then washed just with clear ice-water after 20 minutes (just when the surface seems to be dry) to make the paint cracking, than washed with dirty water to give it a burned out look.

Next pic you can see how the baby got the dental

work…

Then the necks and wings had to be painted for once you glue it together you can't reach most of the parts anymore.

Next pictures do show the first wing attached these I did use some Thai plumbing putty for because I didn't have anything else.

Pro: it cures in less than 3 minutes and holds up to 20 tons, lol (good enough for baby's wings).

Con: Very difficult to handle in small portions and you have to be damned fast…

Heads up and on! Torso re-sculpted (didn't make any pictures of that or deleted them… Just can't remember).Washing, dry-brushing, Eyes coated with glossy lacquer, bashing it onto the base and right into the shelf!

Conclusion: A clumsy looking kit, with no fitting parts at all: If you have the patience to make it fitting and re-place

the wings you'll turn it into a real nice little stomper as far as I'm concerned.

Getting it on the net for approx. US$ 12.00 onwards it's a bargain, a good piece to practice and the results can certainly be a lot nicer than the picture on the box.

If you don't have it already get yourself one!

Have some fun!

Techniques

Casting Conundrums

By Darren Llewellyn

Well after last issues look into the dark world of mould making my esteemed death ray wielding editor felt it would be a good idea to look at casting parts from the moulds made last time. Now as with the last issue while I will do my best to keep everything as general as I can in some instances I will slip into specifics of the material I'm using.

What will we need?
For resin casting the tools that are required are fairly basic and inexpensive for the most part so here is the list

Measuring cups	You will require several different sizes of these, but tiranti does a good line in them and they are quiet cheap
Mixing Cups	I usually use cheap plastic drinking cups for most of my casting, they are cheap, and you can get a large number cheaply from most pound shops or markets.
Mixing stick	Once again with this I usually go for the cheap option of lolly sticks as they can be bought in bulk for a reasonable price. A note should be made here some people recommend that you use a plastic mixing tool but I have never had too many problems with these.
Kitchen Roll/ Plastic Sheet	Basically to minimise the mess made if there are any spills or leaks.
Rubber Gloves	Resin can be hell to get off and can cause skin irritation

With that said we can start, now there are a lot of different types of casting material on the market from plasters thru low melt plastics that can be heated on a home cooker to resins. Since resins will be of interest to most modellers it is this material that I will be focusing on for the most part but the techniques discussed here will be applicable to the

other types of casting material. Before we begin I would just like to note here in all seriousness that we will be dealing with what are basically chemical products and they can as with all chemicals be hazardous. This is not said to frighten anyone or to put you off but just to stress the point that health and safety is paramount and that you should read and follow all the instructions that come with these products before you use them and that you use gloves and safety glasses while using them and a respirator if need be.

Ok with that out of the way we can start with resins

we have quiet a choice from polyester resins to polyurethane resins solid, semi transparent, clear, etc I personally prefer to use a two part polyurethane resin there are a lot of manufactures out there that make these, my first choice would always be alumalite but tiranti supply quiet a few types another popular choice with many modellers is smooth cast, In this article though I will be using a two part resin that is very similar to Alumalite from Tiranti

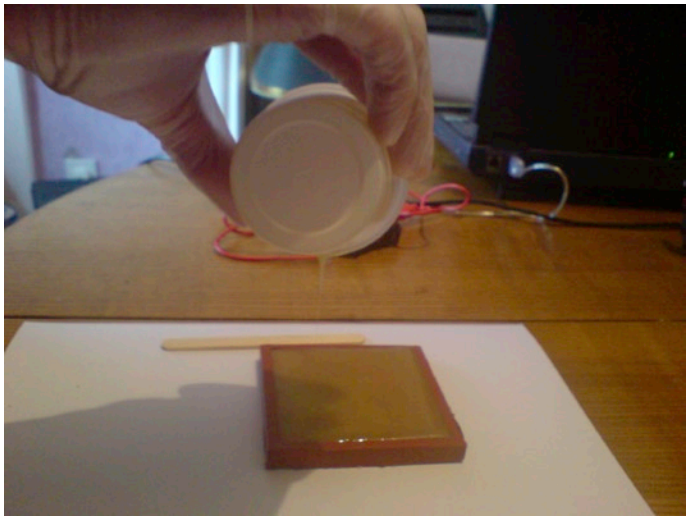
as it is cheaper and gives excellent results, the only downside of this is that it is supplied in large cans that are quiet bulky and awkward to use so I tend to decant it into smaller bottles that I get from a local kitchen supply shop. With the type or resin we will be using chosen we can move on to the actual casting process, as with the moulding process looked at last issue the real key to this is preparation, it is essential that you lay out your moulds and tools first as this will make your life a lot easier when you start.

The resin we are using is a two part resin that requires equal parts of each liquid, the way I usually measure the amount required is to pour water into the mould and use that to calculate how much will

be needed. You will need to pour half this number of each component, for example if we need 50ml of resin to fill the mould we will use 25ml of part A and 25ml of part B to fill the mould. Now we know how much of each component we require we can carefully pour this out into our measuring cups then

we pour the resin into our mixing cup, as mentioned

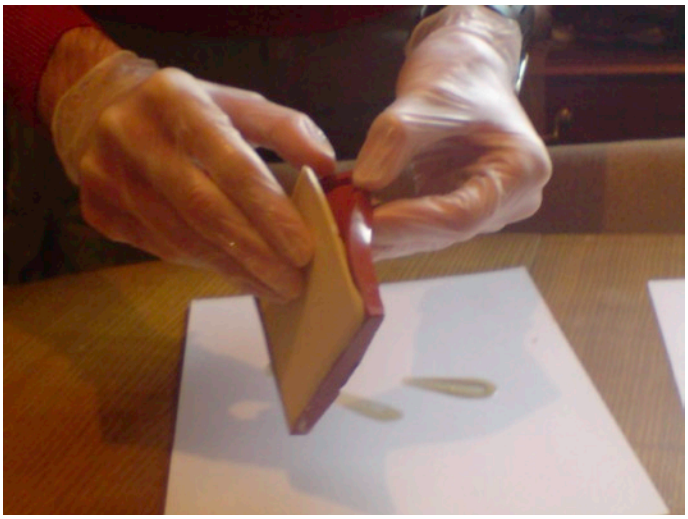
earlier the best thing for this is a plastic cup, now with our mixing stick we can thoroughly mix these two components together as per the instructions given by the manufacturer, once mixed we can now slowly pour the resin into the mould this is done to



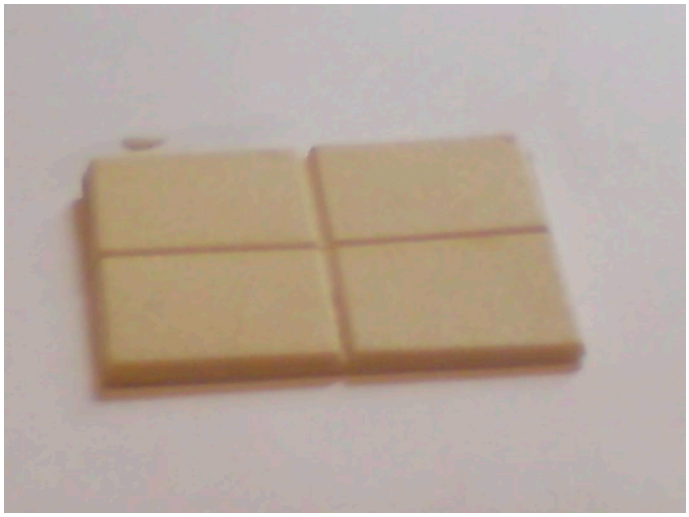
help minimise air bubbles forming in the casting, if it is an open mould you need to be careful not to over fill it, as it will cause “flash” around your

casting piece, not a big deal but a little care now can help minimise this, it is also a good idea to give the mould a tap as it cures to get the last of the air bubbles out. Now comes the part were we have to wait, each product will have it's own cure time, the

one we are using in this article will take about 20



mins to it's de-mould time, at which point it can be removed ready for the next casting to be made from



the mould, most of these resins go from a clear to a solid colour when set so it is easy to tell when they are done.

Once it is removed from the mould the job is done and that is basically resin casting in a nutshell. Tune in next issue for more tips and builds.

Material Suppliers

EMA Model Supplies Limited

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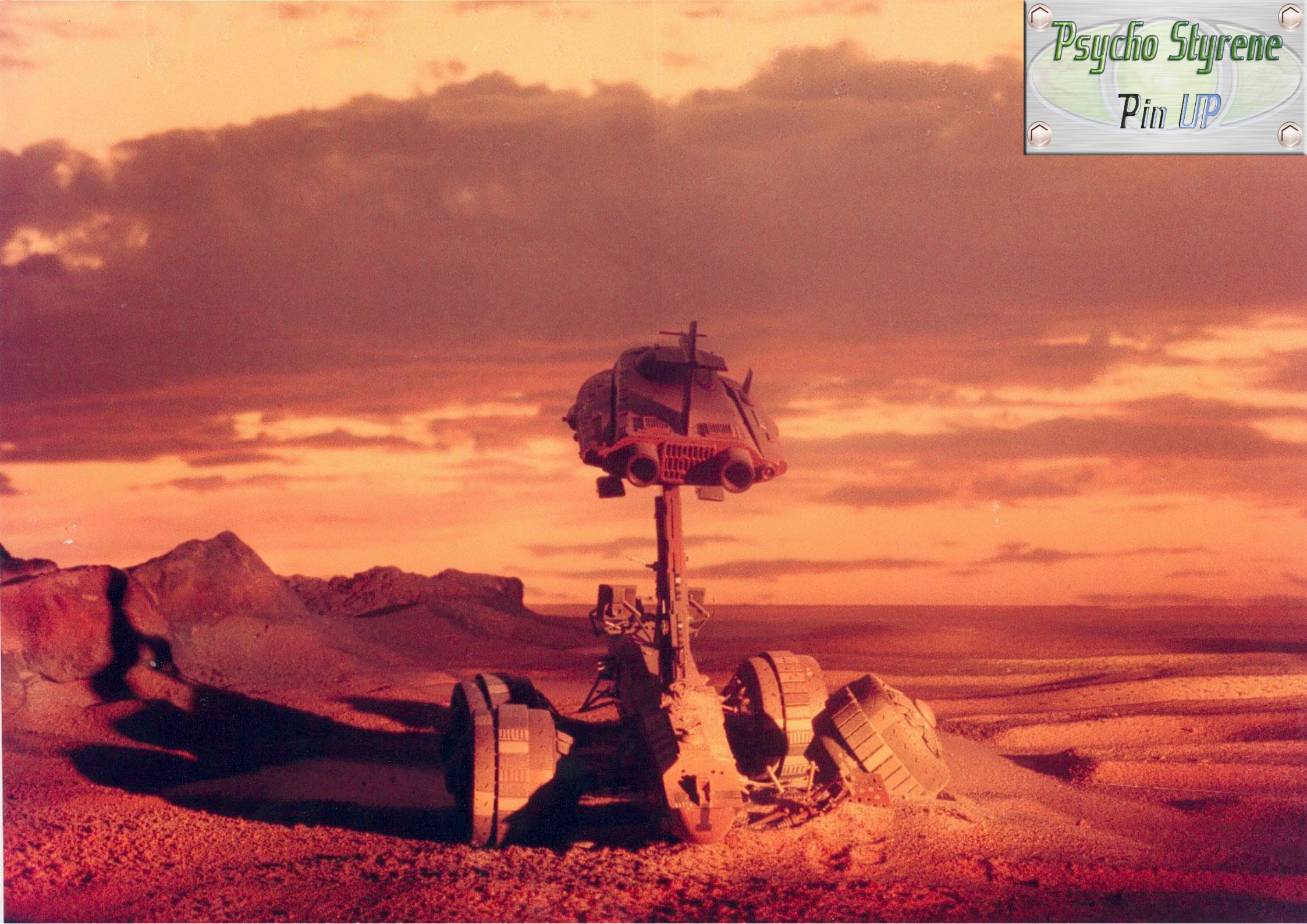
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